

Minutes of the Library Advisory Committee (LAC)
For the Montgomery County Correctional Facility (MCCF)
For December 10, 2018

The meeting, held at the MCCF Library, was called to order by LAC Chair, Kathy Lorr. Attendees included LAC members Frank Joseph, Richard Lorr, and Mier Wolf; Denise Habib, Librarian; and James Donaldson, Acting Assistant Director, Collection and Technology of Montgomery County Public Library (MCPL) and Interim MCCF Library Manager. Not present were Pat Hulsebosch and Tanner Wray, MCPL Board Liaison to the LAC. The minutes of the November 19 meeting were approved. The Chair reminded everyone that our next meeting is on February 11 at the MCCF.

1. **Membership Report.** Kathy, Richard and Patricia had a meeting at their church to recruit new LAC members. One prospect surfaced, Dean Carrigan, and he has asked to attend the February meeting at MCCF; Kathy will send his information to Denise before the meeting. Pat and Kathy hope to have another session at church in January. Richard discussed taking Mier to a Chamber of Commerce meeting in mid-January.
2. **Interim Library Manager's Report.** An offer has been made to a new MCCF Library Manager who could be approved within the next month. James reported that the Library Manager hiring is on track. The selected candidate must go through some hoops and one week of orientation at the end of January before she can begin the job.
3. **Library Board Liaison Report:** No report due to Tanner's absence.
4. **Report on Book Donations.** Pat absent but Denise noted that the library is in an ongoing need for paperback books for inmates who are entering pre-placement and only spend a few days at MCCF. Regarding the LAC's **Goal: Continue to cultivate sources for book donations:**
 - a. James will look into the idea of MCPL libraries taking turns sending books to the MCCF library before they send them to FOL. James asked Denise if she thought this was a good idea.
 - b. Frank will go to the Bethesda FOL and see if we could get remaining books after their book sales.
 - c. The needs of the law library were discussed, and whether our current legal resources are adequate. Denise reported the need for better, updated legal references to serve the inmates. She noted there are 10 on the list for the law library tomorrow; 5 for Thursday morning; and 6 for Thursday afternoon. Denise will send James a list of what the law library needs and he can see if there's space in the current budget to fill this need out of regular MCPL funds. James encouraged this as the appropriate LAC role: to recommend needs to MCPL first to see if they can be met through the regular budgeting process before the LAC considers other sources of funding.

New Business:

1. Dates of future meetings confirmed. James scheduled a room for the March 11 meeting in Rockville. The April 8 meeting at MCCF will include elections and we can decide then on a May meeting.

2. The LAC discussed ideas that surfaced in our meeting in November with FOL Executive Director Ari Brooks and Deputy Director Lysette House, pursuant to our **Goal to Increase awareness of MCCF Library, for example, through liaison with the Friends of the Library**. We all agreed the meeting was very productive. Ari Brooks informed us that we could obtain funding for projects through the central FOL and not need to form a chapter ourselves--certainly for the time being. Since we are a unique library, we could have a unique approach to an FOL. Ari's Development Director is available to work with us to pursue donors and special projects. Ari also indicated that Better World of Books might be a funding source for us. Frank will contact Better World of Books for us to see what they might be interested in funding. FOL funds are good for special projects but not for normal MCPL funded costs. We could try to obtain FOL books before they go to the bookstore for sale. Frank will contact Ari about this. Re FOL funding for honorarium: Ethelbert does not want an honorarium for his work in the Poetry Program and has rejected this idea. Re access to FOL books: again, we may first need to look more closely at library needs and propose books needed to MCPL and ask MCPL to figure out how to get those books. (Discussed under book donation report.)
3. Regarding our **Goal to Increase awareness of and advocacy to address MCCF PL staffing shortages**, the LAC has deferred sending the staffing letter drafted by Frank until our new County Executive has appointed the Director of MCPL. (It was noted that Robert Green will be staying on as Director MCCF.) At that point, Tanner can carry it forward to the Board for their discussion and ratification.
4. Regarding our Goal to **Deepen our understanding of library needs**:
 - a. we had a good discussion of the pre-placement process, e.g., intake and orientation of inmates at DOC before they come to Boyds.
 - b. Kathy passed out a draft library Fact Sheet for use in communication inside and outside of the jail and understanding of the uniqueness of our library community. It could include such information as that inmate stays can be as long as several nights or up to 18 months (2 years waiting for a trial is possible but very rare); that the current jail population is 569 but the jail can hold twice that; that it takes 2 weeks to serve all jail housing units in the library; that law library legal assistance relates to process but not giving legal advice. Kathy will forward the draft Fact Sheet to Denise and Gale for input and review.
 - c. Richard and Pat will arrange to shadow Denise next Tuesday. Frank and Mier will shadow her on February 5 (Mier is away for 3 weeks starting on 2/10.)
 - d. Richard's proposal for an inmate survey is deferred until we have heard what we learn from these observations. The survey form, implementation, timing, and the questions asked will need to be discussed with our new Library Manager, e.g., whether it is implemented by the new Library Manager, by Denise, by LAC observers, or in connection with a focus group.
5. Regarding our **Goal to Regularize and expand the Poetry Program, and bring more poets and writers to MCCF**: Kathy will run a list of specific dates proposed for MCCF readings on upcoming 2019 holidays (e.g., Mother's Day, Father's Day, Valentines, etc.) by Gale so that these can be scheduled in advance. We discussed the Free Minds program in the DC Jail, something we hope to implement eventually in MCCF but which will require a staffing commitment.
- Next meeting is February 11 at MCCF in Clarksburg at 11:00 a.m.

- Submitted by Mier Wolf, Secretary Pro Tem; with notes added by Kathy Lorr